

NEWS RELEASE

**OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
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For Immediate Release

MAY 13, 2005

Ronald J. Tenpas, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Illinois, announced today that on May 13, 2005, **LAURA LEE MARRS**, age 28, of Carlyle, Illinois (formerly of West Frankfort, Illinois), was sentenced in the United States District Court in Benton. MARRS was sentenced to 18 months imprisonment, five years supervised release, and ordered to pay \$110,750 in restitution.

MARRS had previously pleaded guilty to a one count federal indictment. The Indictment charged that from on or about January 1, 2002, to February 4, 2003, in Williamson County, within the Southern District of Illinois, MARRS, being an officer, director, agent, or employee of the Southern Illinois University Credit Union, an institution the deposits of which were on those dates insured by the National Credit Union Administration, did with intent to injure or defraud the Southern Illinois University Credit Union, embezzle the sum of approximately \$106,000 of the monies and funds belonging to or entrusted to the custody or care of the Southern Illinois University Credit Union, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 657.

The facts established that MARRS, who was the branch manager of the Southern Illinois University Credit Union branch office in Marion, Illinois, embezzled \$106,000 from the Southern Illinois University Credit Union to use for her own personal benefit. The embezzlement was discovered on February 5, 2003, when Southern Illinois University Credit Union staff conducted a surprise audit of their Marion, Illinois branch. MARRS received an enhanced sentence because she abused a position of trust at the Credit Union.

The investigation was conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney George Norwood.